

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COPENH 01691 221710Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 INRE-00
MC-02 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IGA-02 AID-05 EB-08
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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4149
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
SEC AF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
CSAF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE//ECJ4/7- -//
ASD WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OH

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 1691

EO 11652: GDS
TAGSC MASS, JIL, DA
SUBJECT: F-16 AND MINISTERS OF DEFENSE MEETING IN BRUSSELS

REF: SECDEF MESSAGE 1314 DTG 02010Z MAR 77

SUMMARY: WE HAVE RECEIVED DANISH VIEWS ON THE MEETING
OF MINISTERS OF DEFENSE OF DENMARK, BELGUM, NORWAY
AND THE NETHERLANDS IN BRUSSELS, THURSDAY, MARCH
24. THE DANES EXPECT A DISCUSSION OF THE REMAINING
PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE FOUR COUNTRIES PRIOR TO SIGNING
THE F-16 LETTER OF OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE. THESE INCLUDE
F-16 PAYMENT SCHEDULES AND OFFET LEVELS.
MAJOR CONTROVERSIES ARE
NOT EXPECTED TO ARISE. END SUMMARY

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1. THE MINISTERS OF DEFENSE OF DENMARK, BELGIUM, NORWAY,
AND THE NETHERLANDS WILL MEET IN BRUSSELS AT 1500 HOURS
THURSDAY TO DISCUSS THEIR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS ON THE
F-16 PRIOR TO SIGNING THE LETTER OF OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE.
A KEY DANISH DEFENSE OFFICIAL DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS
QUOTE THEATRE THUNDER UNQUOTE, A LOUD NOISE WITHOUT
MUCH SUBSTANCE BUT HEARD BY THE APPROPRIATE AUDIENCE.

2. THE ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED BY THE MINISTERS ARE:

(1) AN EVALUATION OF EACH MEMBER'S ABILITY TO MEET F-16 PAYMENT SCHEDULES; (2) OFFSET LEVELS OBTAINED OR EXPECTED TO BE OBTAINED BY EACH COUNTRY; (3) DISCUSSION OF THE NEXT STEPS THEY SHOULD TAKE, EITHER COLLECTIVELY OR INDIVIDUALLY, PRIOR TO SIGNING THE LETTER OF OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE.

3. DANISH OFFICIALS FEEL THAT THERE ARE FEW REMAINING OBSTACLES IN THE PROGRAM AND THAT, UNLESS UNFORESEEN DIFFICULTIES ARISE THURSDAY, ALL COUNTRIES EXCEPT PERHAPS BELGIUM SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO SIGN THE FINAL CONTRACT IN LATTER PART OF APRIL.

4. IN DENMARK, THE ONLY UNKNOWN FACTOR IS MOD MOLLER'S INTERPRETATION OF THE LEVEL OF OFFSET THAT WILL BE ACHIEVED IN DENMARK AND WHETHER OR NOT HE CAN GUARANTEE TO HIS CONSTITUENTS AND CRITICS THAT THE LEVEL OF OFFSETS WILL BE SUFFICIENT. THE FEBRUARY 28TH LETTER FROM DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DUNCAN TO MOLLER (REFERENCE MESSAGE) DID MUCH TO APPEASE MOLLER'S ADVERSARIES. IF HE FEELS HE HAS SUFFICIENT GUARANTEES FROM THE U.S. TO REACH AN ACCEPTABLE OFFSET LEVEL IN THE FUTURE, HIS MAJOR PROBLEM APPEARS RESOLVED.

5. ONE OUTCOME OF THURSDAY'S MEETING COULD BE ANOTHER LETTER FROM THE FOUR MINISTERS TO SECDEF BROWN
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ADDRESSING ADDITIONAL OFFSET OPTIONS IF BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS OBJECT STRONGLY TO THE U.S. APPROACH OF PLACING FUTURE F-16 CONTRACTS IN NORWAY AND DENMARK. HOWEVER, THIS APPEARS UNLIKELY AS THE MINISTERS MUST APPRECIATE THE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVITY OF CONTINUED APPEALS TO THE U.S. FOR INTERCESSION INTO PROBLEMS THAT THE EUROPEANS MUST RESOLVE THEMSELVES. THE DANES FEEL THAT, IF BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS DO NOT OBJECT TOO STRONGLY TO THE PROPOSALS OF FUTURE CONTRACTS BEING AWARDED IN DENMARK AND NORWAY, THEN THERE ARE FEW DANISH PROBLEMS TO BE DISCUSSED THURSDAY IN BRUSSELS.
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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